



United States Department of the Interior

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
Conservation Division
P. O. Box 26124
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125

Confidential Claim Retracted

Authorized by: SC

Date: 9/26/13

December 9, 1977

Memorandum

To: Conservation Manager, Central Region

From: Area Mining Supervisor

Subject: The Anaconda Company's Mining and Reclamation Plan for the PW2-PW3 Mine Project (Underground--Uranium), Pueblo of Laguna Uranium Lease No. 1 (Jackpile Mining Lease), Laguna Indian Reservation, Valencia County, New Mexico

For your review and approval, enclosed are copies of the subject plan and corresponding environmental analysis (EA). Please note that the documents constitute one volume, the plan being included as Appendix I of the EA.

Also enclosed is a draft of a letter of approval for the subject plan. This letter contains the two recommendations from the EA as conditions of approval. The Pueblo of Laguna and the Southern Pueblos Agency of the BIA have both approved the subject plan, their correspondence to this effect being included in Appendix II of the EA. Please note that the Pueblo of Laguna and the Southern Pueblos Agency did not indicate any conditions for approval of the plan.

The uranium mining and reclamation plans and corresponding EA's that we have recently submitted to your office have met with some delay in the course of review. Due to the nature of this plan and the necessity for its earliest approval, we feel obligated to point out certain characteristics of the plan in hopes of expediting the review and approval process.

1. This plan provides for a very small, scam type operation to recover several small uranium ore deposits (36,500 tons in place) located on the northwest edge of the mined North Pagate Pit. These deposits were not open-pit mined due to their close proximity to the village of Pagate and State Highway 279. Other operations of this type, i.e. the H-1 and P-9-2 Adit Mine Projects, have previously been approved and conducted within the lease area.

2. Timely approval of the plan is imperative due to the necessity for backfilling of the abandoned North Pagate Pit. Stripping is presently being conducted in an area near the PW2-PW3 ore bodies, and the lessee desires to use the overburden from this area for backfill material. Further delay of



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the PW2-PW3 Mine Project could seriously hinder the backfilling and reclamation of the North Paguate Pit, while immediate backfilling of this pit area would result in the loss of uranium ore and additional royalty payments to the Pueblo of Laguna. The PW2-PW3 ore deposits are not large enough to warrant a separate or different type of mining operation.

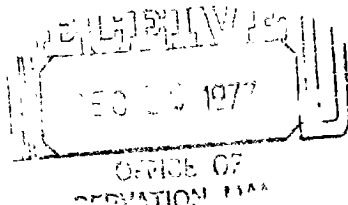
3. The plan and EA for the PW2-PW3 Project have been reviewed separately by the Pueblo of Laguna, USGS and BIA, and by a committee consisting of personnel from these parties and The Anaconda Company (see enclosed memorandums). Both the plan and EA are considered to be satisfactory by all involved parties. The Pueblo of Laguna and the BIA have approved the plan, and the BIA recommends that the USGS "take the necessary action to approve the plan also."


4. The mining plan and EA for the PW2-PW3 Mine Project are considered adequate by the involved parties, but it should be noted that the EA was prepared prior to the October 31, 1977, issuance of the new Environmental Analysis Procedures and Guidelines (Instructional Memorandum No. 77-03-PR). We cannot foresee any problems in this regard.

We have, however, noticed two deficiencies in our EA, and we are currently proceeding to correct these. The Fish and Wildlife Service has been contacted to obtain an endangered species clearance for the project. Anaconda is proceeding to obtain a formal archaeological clearance for the project from the Albuquerque office of the BIA which grants all such clearances on the Laguna Indian Reservation. This process will merely entail receiving formal approval of the archaeological report in Appendix VI of the EA.

5. It should be pointed out that February 25, 1977, Anaconda submitted a comprehensive mining and reclamation plan covering all of its open-pit and underground uranium mining operations on the Laguna Indian Reservation. The PW2-PW3 Mine Project is included in this plan. An EA of the plan is being prepared by this office, and both the plan and EA will be reviewed in the same manner as those for the PW2-PW3 Mine Project. We feel that the cumulative environmental impacts of Anaconda's mining operations can best be analyzed in the EA of this comprehensive plan, and the Pueblo of Laguna and BIA have generally agreed with this.

We would appreciate receiving your instructions on this submittal as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please contact this office. Also, Mr. William Gray, Director--Environmental Affairs, The Anaconda Company, has volunteered to assist in answering any questions that may arise. His telephone number in Denver is 534-7555, Extension 263, and his address is 660 Bannock Street, Denver, Colorado 80204.




DALE C. JONES
Mining Engineer
For Area Mining Supervisor

Enclosures